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## THE SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC POSITION OF WOMEN IN ARISTOPHANES.

BY HERMAN W. HALEY.

THE object of this paper is to collect the passages in Aristophanes which bear upon the social and domestic position of women (except hetaerae) and to state briefly some of the inferences which may be drawn from them. Statements of other authors and generally received opinions are referred to only incidentally. The more important passages are quoted at length; the others are merely cited. Meineke's text has been used for the extant plays; Kock's, in his "Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta," Vol. I., for the fragments.

The testimony of Aristophanes as to the life and manners of his time must not be accepted without important allowances. We must constantly ask to what extent the poet was influenced by the *wish to produce a comic effect*. It should also be kept in mind that he wrote chiefly—if not exclusively—for a *male* public, and that his fertile imagination sometimes conceived scenes and situations which had only the semblance of reality. Yet his unhesitating frankness and freedom of expression make him an extremely valuable authority; and he abounds in incidental touches and "side-lights" in which there can be no intentional misrepresentation.

### POPULAR ESTIMATE OF WOMAN.

This question must be treated with special caution. It would not be safe, perhaps, to infer that any single passage in Aristophanes embodies the common estimate of women, or even the poet's own opinion about them; but the consensus of a large number of passages shows conclusively that in the time of Aristophanes the popular estimate of woman was a low one.

*Women's Estimate of Themselves.* Especially striking are the passages in which women are represented as *depreciating their own sex*. For example take Lys. 8-11 :

Α. ἀλλ' ὃ Καλονίκη κάομαι τὴν καρδίαν,  
καὶ πόλλ' ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν γυναικῶν ἄχθομαι,  
ὅτι ἡ παρὰ μὲν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν νενομίσμεθα  
εἶναι πανοῦργοι, Κ. καὶ γὰρ ἐσμὲν νῆ Δία.

Similar is Lys. 42-5 :

τί δ' ἂν γυναῖκες φρόνιμον ἐργασαίμεθα  
ἢ λαμπρόν, αἱ καθήμεθ' ἐξανθισμέναι,  
κροκωτὰ φοροῦσαι καὶ κεκαλωπισμέναι  
καὶ κιμβερίκ' ὀρθοστάδια καὶ περιβαρίδας ;

Cf. also Lys. 31 ; 137-9 ; 1124 ; Thesm. 371 ; 531-2.

Doubtless in writing thus Aristophanes was influenced by the fact that he was composing for a male audience. Women in real life would probably not have spoken so disparagingly of themselves. But surely he would not have used such language unless they were actually inclined to put a low estimate on their own sex. *A certain degree of verisimilitude is necessary to comic effect.*

Yet Aristophanes does not by any means represent women as altogether devoid of self-respect. The ladies in the Thesmophoriazusae (520 seqq.) show a very natural indignation after listening to the audacious speech of Mnesilochus, and afterwards make a very ingenious but somewhat whimsical defence of their sex (785 seqq.).

*Men's Estimate of Women.* There are not a few passages which express, or imply in general terms, a low opinion of women on the part of the men. The best examples are Lys. 8-11, already quoted, and Thesm. 786 seqq. :

καίτοι πᾶς τις τὸ γυναικείον φύλον κακὰ πόλλ' ἀγορεύει,  
ὥς πᾶν ἐσμὲν κακὸν ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ἅπαντα,  
ἕριδες νείκη στάσις ἀργαλέα λύπη πόλεμος.

Cf. Lys. 261 ; 1014-15 ; 1037-9 ; Thesm. 737-8. Less definite are Av. 1639 ; Eq. 1056-7 ; perhaps Nub. 691-2.

*Influence of Euripides.* The plays of Euripides no doubt helped to form an unfavorable estimate of woman, though Aristophanes has much exaggerated their effect. In Thesm. 385 seqq. the severity of Euripides toward women and its supposed consequences are described at length. Cf. Ran. 1049-55 ; 1079-82 ; Lys. 283 ; 368-9 ; Thesm. 81-6 ; 378-9 ; 466-70 ; 544-8 ; 1160-70, and indeed the entire plot of the play.

*The Popular Estimate as exemplified in Aristophanes.* We may also draw some inferences as to the general estimation in which women were held from the light in which they are represented by Aristophanes himself. His plays reflect the sentiments of the public for which he wrote as well as his own personal tastes and feelings. He would never have treated women with such severity if he had not been sure that he would please his audience by so doing.

We find women frequently represented as fond of drink. Cf. *Lys.* 113-4; 195-239; 395; 465-6; *Thesm.* 347-8; 556-7; 630-1; 689-759, especially the amusing outburst at 735:

ὦ θερμότεραι γυναῖκες, ὦ ποτίσταται  
καὶ πάντος ὑμεῖς μηχανώμεναι πικρῶν.

Add *Eccl.* 44-5; 132-46; 153-5; 227; 1118-22; *Pl.* 644-6; 737; 972.<sup>1</sup> They are often spoken of or represented as licentious. Cf. *Ach.* 1058-60; *Nub.* 51-2; 1068-70; *Pax* 979-85; *Av.* 793-6; *Lys.* 23-5; 107-10; 125-147; 158-9; 212-5; 403-19; 705-60; *Thesm.* 340-5; 476-501; 558-9; *Eccl.* 7-10; 225; 228; 693-701; 877-1111; *Pl.* 959-1096. The passages where they use coarse language are exceedingly numerous. For instances of this, cf. *Lys.* 23-5; 59-60; 88-92; 107-10; 120 seqq.; 158-9; 227-32; 362-3; 715; 742-57; 771; 800; 825-8; 1112-21; *Eccl.* 256-7; 884-937. For their practice of deceiving their husbands with supposititious children, cf. *Thesm.* 339-40; 407-9; 502-16; 564-5. They are also represented as accomplished liars and deceivers. Cf. *Eccl.* 237-8; 528-46; *Thesm.* 483-5; 558-9. For their superstition, cf. *Lys.* 63-4; *Pl.* 688-93; *Thesm.* 534.

The fact that Aristophanes ventured to draw such a picture of the women of his time shows not only that their standard of morality was lower than that of the women of our day, but also that they were viewed harshly and unfavorably by men.

#### WOMEN NOT THE EQUALS AND CONFIDANTES OF THEIR HUSBANDS.

In the historic period the wife occupied a much lower position than in earlier times. She came to be regarded not as the peer and companion of her husband, but rather as the manager of his house-

<sup>1</sup> So Eupolis and Euripides: cf. *Nub.* 555; *Thesm.* 393.

hold, respected, it is true, in her own separate sphere, but playing no important part in his personal life.

*Husband's Authority over the Wife.* There are many passages in Aristophanes which illustrate the husband's authority over the wife. The best is *Lys.* 507-20, which is undoubtedly a picture from real life. The wife was obliged to bear in silence the misery caused by the war (verse 509); if she ventured to ask the simplest question about public matters, her husband roughly told her to hold her tongue (514-5); if she undertook to remonstrate with him about some unwise measure, he angrily bade her tend to her spinning or she would catch it (519-20). Strepsiades indeed seems to have been compelled to hint his wishes to his wife (*Nub.* 53-5); but, excepting such unusual cases, the husband might give his wife orders and expect to be obeyed. Cf. *Ach.* 262; *Av.* 665-6; *Thesm.* 790; *Eccl.* 335.<sup>1</sup> Passages like *Pax* 1329-31; *Av.* 1759-61; *Lys.* 873; 877-8; 883; 899; 904; 924 et al.; *Eccl.* 562-3 and the like, furnish less definite evidence, although they are spoken by a husband to his wife.

The husband could compel his wife to submit by physical force, sometimes by beating her. Cf. *Lys.* 160-2; 516; 519-20, and *Frag.* 10:

οὐκ ἐτός, ὦ γυναῖκες,  
πᾶσι κακοῖσιν ἡμᾶς  
φλώσιν ἐκάστοθ' ἄνδρες.

The fear of being divorced was also an incentive to obedience on the part of wives. Cf. *Lys.* 157.

On the other hand, when a wife wished to gain an end from her husband, she either obtained it by flattery and little attentions (*Vesp.* 610-2; cf. *Lys.* 512), by making herself uncomfortable to him (*Lys.* 164-5; cf. *Nub.* 60-7), or by use of her personal attractions (*Lys.* 120-4; 149-54, cf. 46-8; 219-22; 551-4; 900-3; 931-2; 950-1, and indeed the whole plot of the play).

*Exceptions.* Other evidence of the husband's authority will be given in other connections. But there are a few apparent exceptions which require examination. In *Nub.* 60-7 we have an account of a wife's quarrel with her husband over the naming of their child, which lasted until the matter was settled by a compromise; but this

<sup>1</sup> *Ach.* 1003-6 are also in point if the γυναῖκες addressed are the wife and daughter of Dicaeopolis, as Merry supposes; but this is not proved.

was clearly a very unusual case. As we learn from 46 seqq., the wife was a haughty, luxurious dame from the city, belonging to the aristocratic and ancient family of the Alcmaeonidae; she therefore naturally despised her rustic husband, and treated him with an independence which most wives would not have dared to assume.

The behavior of Myrrhine to her husband (Lys. 872-951, especially 873, 893, 896, 900-904) is also exceptional. She is acting under the directions of Lysistrata (839-41), and according to the plan agreed upon. The whole scene is imaginary, and not taken from real life.

The same is true in part of the scene between Praxagora and Blepyrus (Eccl. 520-729, especially 520-49, 596). Praxagora has just succeeded in transferring the government of the state to the women, and has herself been chosen *στρατηγίς*; it is natural, therefore, for her to speak with unusual boldness. Besides, this very scene, when carefully studied, shows that in the ordinary state of affairs the man was master. Observe what questions Blepyrus puts to his wife about her absence, and his undisguised astonishment at her answers (520 seqq.).

*Lack of Confidence between Husband and Wife.* The evidence shows conclusively that there was a lack of confidence between husband and wife. It will be seen later that the wife could not leave the house without arousing her husband's suspicions. It is clear from Lys. 507-20 that men were generally unwilling to talk with their wives about public affairs. This reticence was perhaps to be expected. But it is a striking fact that there is no instance in Aristophanes of a husband confiding to his wife any important secret or asking her advice about any contemplated step. This lack of confidence often became actual suspicion. Frag. 187,

πάσαις γυναῖξιν ἐξ ἑνός γε τοῦ τρόπου  
ὥσπερ παροψίς μοιχὸς ἐσκευασμένος,

no doubt expressed exactly the belief of many Athenian husbands. Hence they took precautions like those described in Thesm. 395-404; 414-8; where, however, there is probably some comic exaggeration.

*Lack of Conjugal Affection.* Expressions of a husband's affection for his wife or of her love for him are noticeably rare in the Aris-

tophonic plays. Those which do occur, e.g. Lys. 99 seqq.; 710-80; 853-60; 865-71; 872; 885-8; 905; 918-9; 950, when taken in connection with the context point chiefly to *sensual* love. Passages like Ach. 132; Pax 1325; Av. 368; Pl. 249-51 prove only that the husband was interested in the wife as a member of his household, but show no strong personal affection. Cf. Ran. 586-8; Pl. 1103-6, where the wife is similarly mentioned as a part of the household. Nub. 1445 shows only the horror which a son's beating his own mother would naturally excite in the father's mind. (Cf. Ran. 149.) It does not imply that Strepsiades felt any strong love for his wife *as such*.

*Evidences of Domestic Unhappiness.* Passages which point to occasional domestic unhappiness are Nub. 41 seqq.; Lys. 260-1; Eccl. 323-6; Frag. 588, and the passages regarding adultery, which will be cited elsewhere. Ach. 816-7; Pax 1138; Thesm. 289-90 also suggest a lack of love and respect between husband and wife.

The evidence of Aristophanes confirms the usual view that conjugal affection was rare among the Athenians. Yet it is hard to believe that the poet who drew such a picture of home life as that in Pax 1127-58 did not see the brighter side of the marriage relation.

#### WOMEN NOT ALLOWED TO APPEAR IN PUBLIC BUT CONFINED TO THE HOUSE.

Athenian women were strictly excluded from public affairs. Cf. Av. 828-31; Lys. 492-610 (especially 499-500; 503; 507-29); 626-9; 649-51; Eccl. 110-310 (especially 110-20; 128; 132 seqq.; 240-44). Women of the better class were not even allowed to appear in public except on certain special occasions, and were not permitted to associate with men unless they were near relatives. As will be seen, women enjoyed a certain degree of liberty; but in general the words of Calonice (Lys. 16), *χαλεπή τοι γυναικῶν ἔξοδος*, were strictly true.

*Restraint on Unmarried Women.* Maidens were closely confined to the gynaeconitis, and were expected to behave quietly and demurely. Thus the women in Lys. 473-5 say:

ἐπεὶ θέλω ᾧ σωφρόνως ὥσπερ κόρη καθῆσθαι,  
λυποῦσα μηδέν' ἐνθαδί, κινουσα μηδὲ κάρφος.

It is noticeable that Aristophanes seldom represents young women as speaking. The girls of the Megarian in the *Acharnenses* and of Trygaeus in the *Pax* are children not fully grown. Eccl. 884-1042 is not to be taken into account, as the girl who appears there is an hetaera. Besides, this scene is supposed to occur after the women have become rulers of the state, and so have gained greater liberty. The daughter of Dicaeopolis speaks two verses (Ach. 245-6) when assisting at the celebration of the Rural Dionysia. These are the only cases in the extant plays where young women speak on the stage, if we except the goddess Iris, who speaks in Av. 1202 seqq. If we exclude slaves and members of choruses, the only other instances where young women appear on the stage are Pax 520-728; 819-910; 1316-57; Av. 1720 seqq. But Opora, Theoria and Basileia are not mortal women, and Opora and Basileia are brides accompanying their respective bridegrooms. Probably it was not easy for the poet to bring unmarried girls upon the stage, because in real life it was considered improper for them to be seen out of doors. Married women, old women and πόρναι appear more frequently.

Not only were girls confined to the house, but they were watched by their parents and even by their brothers (Thesm. 405-6). We may conclude from Lys. 593 that even unmarried women who had passed their prime were quite closely confined to the women's apartments.

*Liberty of Unmarried Women on Religious Occasions.* Yet maidens sometimes appeared in public on special occasions, particularly at certain festivals. Thus a girl of noble family, when between seven and eleven years of age, might be chosen one of the ἀρρηφόροι.<sup>1</sup> When ten years old, she might be one of the ἀλετριδες<sup>2</sup> who ground the meal for the sacrifice to Athena ἀρχηγέτις.<sup>3</sup> At the Brauronia, which festival was celebrated every five years in the deme of Brauron

<sup>1</sup> On the Arrhephoria or Ersephoria, cf. Schol. on Lys. 642; Etymol. Mag. 149, 13; Harpocration s.v. ἀρρηφορέω; Pausanias I. 27, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. on Lys. 643: γίνονται δέ τινες τῶν ἐν γεγωνιῶν ἀλετριδες τῇ θεῇ παρθένοι αἵτινες τὰ εἰς τὴν θυσίαν πόπανα ἀλοῦσι, καὶ ἔστιν ἔντιμον τοῦτο. Cf. Eustathius 1885, 9.

<sup>3</sup> The Schol. on Lys. 644 says that ἡ ἀρχηγέτις is Artemis or Demeter; but in Attic inscriptions the title is given to Athena. Cf. C. I. G. 476; 477; 2155; 666 (*in addendis*).



in honor of Artemis, chosen Athenian maidens between five and ten years old went in procession to the temple of the goddess, wearing saffron-colored robes, and there performed a propitiatory rite, imitating bears, whence they were called ἄρκτοι.<sup>1</sup> Young women also took part in religious processions (πομπαί) as canephoroi, carrying a basket (κανοῦν) containing sacred utensils or offerings. They were richly dressed and wore golden ornaments,<sup>2</sup> and sometimes carried a string of dried figs. These various functions are enumerated in Lys. 641-7:

ἐπτα μὲν ἔτη γεγῶσ' εὐθὺς ἡρρηφόρου·  
εἰτ' ἀλετρὶς ἢ δεκέτις οὔσα τὰρχηγέτι·  
καὶ τ' ἔχουσα τὸν κροκωτὸν ἄρκτος ἢ βραυρωνίους·  
κάκανηφόρον ποτ' οὔσα παῖς καλὴ ἔχουσ'  
ισχάδων ὀρμαθόν.

The daughter of Dicaeopolis acts as *κανηφόρος* in the phallic procession when her father is celebrating the Rural Dionysia. Cf. Ach. 242-6; 253-60. There were canephoroi also in the sacred processions which went out to Eleusis in honor of Demeter. They were followed by attendants bearing sun-shades and stools.<sup>3</sup> It is clear from Ran. 409-13 and 444-6 that there were girls as well as men and women among the mystae or persons initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries, and that they joined in the procession to the temple and took part in the παννυχίς which followed the arrival in Eleusis.<sup>4</sup> We may perhaps infer from Thesm. 101-3 that maidens danced in honor of the *χθόνιαι θεαί*, Demeter and Persephone.

*Liberty of Unmarried Women on Secular Occasions.* Girls were sometimes brought into court by their parents to excite the compassion of the dicasts. Cf. Vesp. 568-73. They were not entirely excluded from the society of their own sex, as is clear from Eq. 1300-15, where the triremes are personified as a group of women talking together and a maiden (v. 1306) speaks. Compare also Nub. 530-1,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schol. on Lys. 645, and Suidas s.v. ἄρκτος.

<sup>2</sup> For their toilette, cf. Lys. 1188-94 and Schol. on 1195; also Eccl. 732.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Av. 1508, where the Schol. says: σκιάδειον· κατασκεύασμά τι τὸ σκιάδειον, ὅπερ ἔχουσι αἱ κανηφόροι ἀπιούσαι εἰς τὰ Ἑλευσίνια ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ καίεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου; and 1550-52 with the Schol.: ταῖς γὰρ κανηφόροις σκιάδειον καὶ δίφρον ἀκολουθεῖ τις ἔχουσα.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ran. 371, and Kock's note on 316 seqq.

where an unmarried girl exposes her child and another girl comes and takes it up. This passage is figurative, like the preceding, yet both no doubt contain a picture of real life. But in spite of these exceptions the restraint upon unmarried girls was clearly very strong.

*Restraint upon Married Women.* The question as to the degree of liberty enjoyed by married women is a more difficult one. The evidence of Aristophanes shows that it was much greater than some authorities would have us believe.

Among the higher class etiquette forbade a woman to pass the threshold of the house without some imperative reason for doing so. To stay at home was an element in *σωφροσύνη*,<sup>1</sup> the word which to the Attic mind represented the sum of all female virtues. Even the *μοιχενόμεναι γυναῖκες* merely peeped out of the front door and coquetted with the passers-by, drawing back if any one gave attention to them and peeping out again when he went away. Cf. Pax 979-85. The portress was liable to punishment if she opened the door secretly (Vesp. 768). Women of the better class did not like to be seen looking out of the window, as we learn from Thesm. 797-9 :

κὰν ἐκ θυρίδος παρακύπτωμεν, τὸ κακὸν ζητεῖτε θεᾶσθαι·  
κὰν αἰσχυρθεῖς ἀναχωρήσῃ, πολὺ μᾶλλον πᾶς ἐπιθυμεῖ  
αὐτῆς τὸ κακὸν παρακῦψαν ἰδεῖν.

The pressure of domestic duties rendered it hard for women to go out. Thus we read in Lys. 16-9 :

χαλεπή τοι γυναικῶν ἔξοδος.  
ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἡμῶν περὶ τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐκύπτασεν,  
ἡ δ' οἰκέτην ἤγειρεν, ἡ δὲ παιδίον  
κατέκλινεν, ἡ δ' ἔλουσεν, ἡ δ' ἐψώμισε.

The difficulty was increased by the jealous care of their husbands. Cf. Thesm. 789-94 :

τί γαμεῖθ' ὑμεῖς, εἴπερ ἀληθῶς κακὸν ἔσμεν,  
κάπαγορεύετε μήτ' ἐξελεῖν μήτ' ἐκκύψασαν ἀλῶναι,  
ἀλλ' οὕτως πολλῇ σπουδῇ τὸ κακὸν βούλεσθε φυλάττειν ;  
κὰν ἐξελεθῇ τὸ γυναιὸν ποι, κἄθ' εὖρητ' αὐτὸ θύρασιν,  
μανίας μαίνεσθ', οὗς χρὴν σπένδειν καὶ χαίρειν, εἴπερ ἀληθῶς  
ἔνδοθεν ἤρρετε φροῦδον τὸ κακὸν καὶ μὴ κατελαμβάνετ' ἔνδον.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lys. 508.

Even the easy-going Blepyrus is vexed when his wife goes out without his knowledge (Eccl. 311-2; 323-6; 335-8), and questions her sharply on her return (520-50). The precautions which husbands sometimes adopted are described in Thesm. 414-7:

εἶτα διὰ τοῦτον ταῖς γυναικωνίτισιν  
σφραγίδας ἐπιβάλλουσιν ἤδη καὶ μοχλοὺς  
τηροῦντες ἡμᾶς, καὶ προσέτι μολοττικούς  
τρέφουσι μορμολυκεία τοῖς μοιχοῖς κύνας.<sup>1</sup>

When women left the house without permission (except in certain cases, to be mentioned hereafter), it was generally by stealth, without the knowledge of their husbands, and often under cover of the dark. Cf. Lys. 72; Thesm. 478-89; 792; Eccl. 33-51; 287-8 (cf. 478-503); 311-9; 323-6; 335-50; 510-3; 520 seqq.<sup>2</sup> If the husband awoke or detected his wife, she quieted him by some false excuse. Cf. Thesm. 483-5; Eccl. 520-51.

The house is frequently spoken of as the sphere in which the wife regularly lived and moved. Thus in Lys. 260-1 the old men say of the women:

γυναῖκας, αἷς ἐβόσκομεν  
κατ' οἶκον ἐμφανὲς κακόν.

Cf. the women's oath (Lys. 217), οἷκοι δ' ἀταυρώτῃ διάξω τὸν βίον. Similar are Lys. 149; 510; 866, and passages which will be cited with reference to women's duties.<sup>3</sup>

It follows almost as a matter of course from what has been said that men, except near relatives, were excluded from the gynaeconitis. We do not find any instance where men visit openly the wives of other men,<sup>4</sup> or enter the women's apartment of any house except

<sup>1</sup> But Göll (Charikles, Vol. III. p. 332) is no doubt right in supposing that there is a good deal of comic exaggeration in this passage. Such precautions could not have been usual, or even common.

<sup>2</sup> The women in the Ecclesiazusae had, of course, an additional motive for secrecy because they ventured to attend the ecclesia at great risk of punishment from the state.

<sup>3</sup> Women of the better class are never mentioned as present at the men's banquets or symposia. Pl. 613-5 simply refers to sumptuous living, not to the banquets of the men. But hetaerae, dancing-girls, etc., were frequently present at the men's feasts. Cf. Ach. 1091-3; Vesp. 1342 seqq.; Ran. 513-5 et al.

<sup>4</sup> Very curious is Frag. 451:

γυναῖκα δὴ ζητοῦντες ἐνθάδ' ἤκομεν,  
ἣν φασιν εἶναι παρὰ σέ.

their own. Even such a case as Pl. 249-51, where Chremylus invites the god in to see his wife and children, is clearly exceptional. The wife while busy about her household duties must sometimes have seen men who came to visit her husband and have heard them talk, but only incidentally. It was perhaps in this way that women gained some knowledge of public matters. Cf. Lys. 510-1; 517; cf. 1126; Eccl. 137-43.

*Liberty of Married Women on Religious Occasions.* Married women attended and took part in numerous festivals, and on such occasions enjoyed considerable freedom.

The most important of the women's festivals was the Thesmophoria.<sup>1</sup> This was celebrated entirely by women, men being carefully excluded. Cf. Thesm. 91-2; 184-92; 204-5; 575-687, and indeed the entire plot of the play. If a man was caught intruding, he was severely punished. Cf. Thesm. 930-44; 1001 seqq. Slaves (Thesm. 293-4) and unmarried women (cf. 619) were not admitted. The restraint upon women was much relaxed during the Thesmophoriazusae are purely an invention of the poet. They lived in tents or booths during a part of the festival (Thesm. 658; 796), and had tent-mates (624). They sometimes became tired and fell asleep in others' quarters, and then their husbands went about among the tents and searched for them (Thesm. 795-6). The crowd of women assembled at the festival was very large (Thesm. 280-1).

Women were also admitted to the Eleusinian mysteries (Ran. 157; 444), and some of them rode on wagons in the great procession to Eleusis (Pl. 1013). Another festival in which women took part was the Scira, celebrated in Pyanepsion in honor of Athena Sciras (Eccl. 18; 59). Wives of men prominent in the state had the privilege of

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It is the only extant fragment of the *Ποίσις*. We may suppose either that the goddess *Ποίσις* had been taken away, like *Ειρήνη* in the Pax, and that the speaker and his companions had come in search of her: or possibly Aristophanes represented *Ποίσις* as his own wife, who had strayed away from home and for whom he was searching when he spoke the words in the fragment. Cf. Thesm. 795-6. It is well known that in the *Πυρίλη* Cratinus personified *Κωμωδία* as his own wife. Cf. Schol. on Eq. 400. Either of these hypotheses would account for the unusual situation in the fragment.

<sup>1</sup> For a full account of this festival, vid. Schömann, *Griechische Alterthümer*, Vol. II. p. 482 (3d edition).

occupying front seats at this festival and at the Stenia.<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thesm. 834 seqq. Married women were present, at least as spectators, at the Rural Dionysia. Cf. Ach. 245-6; 262. Women took part in the Panathenaic festival, and the wives of metics acted as *διφροφόροι* and *ἰδριαφόροι* in the procession. Cf. Eccl. 734; 738.

Besides these great festivals there were many less important feasts and ceremonies in which women took part. They celebrated noisy orgies in honor of Pan.<sup>2</sup> They had a special cult of Aphrodite at the promontory of Colias where women of loose character resorted.<sup>3</sup> They worshipped the same goddess with lascivious rites under the name of Genetyllis.<sup>4</sup> They also celebrated the Adonia, a festival which began with mourning over the death of Adonis and ended with noisy rejoicings over his return to life. It was a time of great license, as is clear from Lys. 389-97. The festival is also mentioned in Pax 420. Attic women did not at home engage<sup>5</sup> in wild Bacchic orgies such as are referred to in Nub. 603-6 and Lys. 1284; but it may be inferred from Lys. 1<sup>6</sup> and 388 that they had separate feasts of their own in honor of Bacchus. They used drums (*τύμπανα*) in the worship of Bacchus and Cybele (Lys. 3; 388). Women visited the shrine of Aesculapius (Pl. 674; 688-93). A woman sometimes held a private feast in honor of Hecate and invited her female friends (Lys. 700-3). In Lys. 63-4 a woman is mentioned as having inquired at the shrine of Hecate, which probably stood not far from the door (cf. Vesp. 805). A woman comes bringing *καταχύσματα* to pour over Plutus in honor of his recovering his eyesight (Pl. 768 seqq.). An old woman walks in a procession carrying the pots with which the statue of Plutus is to be consecrated (Pl. 1197-1207).

*Attendance of Women at the Theatre.* Aristophanes supplies considerable evidence that Athenian women sometimes attended the

<sup>1</sup> The Schol. on Thesm. 834 regards the Stenia as a festival distinct from the Thesmophoria.

<sup>2</sup> Lys. 2 and Schol.

<sup>3</sup> Lys. 2 and Schol. Cf. Nub. 52.

<sup>4</sup> Lys. 2 and Schol.; Nub. 52; Thesm. 130.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Schömann, Vol. II. p. 503.

<sup>6</sup> The Schol. on this verse observes: *καὶ γὰρ πολλὰς ἑορτὰς αἱ γυναῖκες ἔξω τῶν δημοτελῶν ἦγον ἰδίᾳ συνερχόμεναι.*

theatre. It is not certain just how much importance ought to be attached to Frag. 472,

λήκυθον  
τὴν ἐπτακότυλον, τὴν χυτρεᾶν, τὴν ἀγκύλην,  
ἣν ἐφερόμην, ἐν' ἐχοίμι συνθεάτριαν,

for we have not the context. More satisfactory is Ran. 1049 seqq., which shows that women were present at tragedies :

E. καὶ τί βλάπτουσ' ὃ σφέλι' ἀνδρῶν τὴν πόλιν αἶμαί Σθενέβοιαι;

A. ὅτι γενναίας καὶ γενναίων ἀνδρῶν ἀλόχους ἀνέπεισας  
κῶνεια πιεῖν αἰσχυνθείσας διὰ τοὺς σοὺς Βελλεροφόντας.

We cannot suppose that the plays of Euripides would have produced such a powerful effect upon the minds of the women if they had not witnessed them in person.<sup>1</sup> But the attendance of women at the presentation of tragedies was not invariable, as is clear from Thesm. 395 seqq., where the husbands are said to come home and view their wives with suspicion and search the house for concealed adulterers after hearing the plays of Euripides. Whether women were present also when *comedies* were performed is more doubtful. The evidence of Aristophanes seems to be against the supposition. There are two passages which appear to point to the absence of women when the Aristophanic plays were represented. In Av. 793-6 we read :

εἴ τε μοιχεύων τις ὑμῶν ἐστὶν ὅστις τυγχάνει,  
καὶ ὅρᾳ τὸν ἄνδρα τῆς γυναῖκος ἐν βουλευτικῷ,  
οὗτος ἂν πάλιν παρ' ὑμῶν πτερυγίσας ἀνέπτετο  
εἴτα βινήσας ἐκείθεν αὖθις αὖ καθέζετο.

This clearly implies that women of the higher classes were not present in the audience. Add Pax 962-7 :

T. καὶ τοῖς θεαταῖς ῥίπτε τῶν κριθῶν. O. ἰδού.

T. ἔδωκας ἥδη; O. νῆ τὸν Ἑρμῆν ὥστε γε  
τούτων ὅσοι πέρ εἰσι τῶν θεωμένων  
οὐκ ἐστὶν οὐδείς ὅστις οὐ κριθὴν ἔχει.

T. οὐχ αἱ γυναῖκες γ' ἔλαβον. O. ἀλλ' εἰς ἐσπέραν  
δώσουσιν αὐταῖς ἄνδρες.

Some, like Benndorf, have inferred from this passage that the women sat in the theatre at a considerable distance from the stage. But it clearly implies that there were no women among the θεώμενοι. The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Schol. on Eccl. 22: ὁ δὲ Σφυρόμαχος ψήφισμα εἰσηγήσατο ὥστε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας χωρὶς καθεζεσθαι καὶ τὰς εἵταρας χωρὶς τῶν ἐλευθέρων.

women are mentioned simply to give opportunity for a low joke turning on the double meaning of the word *κριθή*.

There are other facts which tend to confirm this view. It is noteworthy that in several passages men and children are mentioned as constituting the audience, but never women. Cf. Pax 50-2 :

ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν λόγον γε τοῖσι παιδίοις  
καὶ τοῖσιν ἀνδρίοισι καὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν  
καὶ τοῖς ὑπερτάτοισιν ἀνδράσιν φράσω.

Cf. also Eccl. 1146, καλεῖς γέροντα μειράκιον παιδίσκον, Nub. 539-40 and Pax 766. The audience are never addressed as women but only as men.

Lys. 1049-50 has been twisted into a supposed proof that there were women in the audience ; but the words mean simply, "Let every man and woman" (*i.e.* in the *chorus*, which is now composed of both sexes) "make the proclamation." On the other hand, the address of the chorus of women to the *men* in Thesm. 785 seqq. is apparently to the audience as a whole. Rau. 1113-4, where it is said of the audience :

ἐστρατευμένοι γάρ εἰσι,  
βιβλίον τ' ἔχων ἕκαστος μανθάνει τὰ δεξιά,

cannot be meant to include women.

It is noticeable that there are no personal jests on women which *point them out* as present among the spectators ; no *deictic* jests as we might call them, such as Pax 883-5 ; Pl. 800 ; Nub. 1099-1101, and the like. Another fact which is often overlooked is the strongly political character of many of the comedies. The parabases especially often contain political addresses and arguments. Now as women were carefully excluded from participation in, and even from knowledge of, public affairs, it does not seem probable that plays so strongly political were intended for an audience of which they formed a part. The evidence of Aristophanes, though not decisive, appears then, on the whole, to justify the conclusion that women were present at the performance of tragedies but not of comedies.

*Marriage and Burial.* Women enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom in connexion with the various ceremonies of marriage.

Frag. 142,

ἀποπλευστέ' οὖν ἐπὶ τὸν νυμφίον, ᾧ γαμοῦμαι  
τῇμερον,

is spoken by a bride to a former admirer on her marriage-day. Unfortunately the context is lost, so that we cannot tell how the scene was motived. In Ach. 1056 seqq. the bridesmaid (νυμφεύτρια) brings a message from the bride to Dicaeopolis. In marriage processions the bride rode in a carriage with the bridegroom<sup>1</sup>; she was dressed in costly attire,<sup>2</sup> wore a chaplet,<sup>3</sup> and was perfumed.<sup>4</sup> No doubt other women beside the bride were present at the marriage-feast in Pax 1305 seqq., and formed part of the marriage processions in Pax 1316 seqq. and Av. 1721 seqq.; but we have no *direct* evidence of this in the text.<sup>5</sup>

Women had also their part in the ceremonies of burial. Thus a woman kneaded the honey-cake which was given to the dead. Cf. Lys. 601. Women attended to the laying out of the body (πρόθεσις). Thus Lysistrata says to the πρόβουλος (Lys. 611): μὴν ἐγκαλεῖς ὅτι οὐχὶ προϋθέμεσθά σε; The process is described in Eccl. 1030 seqq., where the young man says to the old woman:

ὑποστόρεσαί νυν πρῶτα τῆς ὀριγάνου,  
καὶ κλήμαθ' ὑπόθου συγκλάσασα τέτταρα,  
καὶ ταινίωσαι καὶ παράθου τὰς ληκύθους,  
ὑδατὸς τε κατάθου τοῦστρακον πρὸ τῆς θύρας.

Cf. Eccl. 536–8, where Blepyrus says to Praxagora:

ἀλλ' ἔμ' ἀποδύσας ἐπιβαλοῦσα τοῦγκυκλον  
ῥῆχον καταλιποῦς ὥσπερ εἰ προκείμενον,  
μόνον οὐ στεφανώσας οὐδ' ἐπιθεῖσα λήκυθον.

Women seem to have prepared the sacrificial meal which was offered on the third day. Cf. Lys. 612–3, where Lysistrata says:

ἀλλ' ἐς τρίτην γοῶν ἡμέραν σοὶ πρῶ πάντων  
ἤξει παρ' ἡμῶν τὰ τρίτ' ἐπεσκευασμένα.

*Liberty of Women on Secular Occasions.* There was a numerous class of women at Athens who, though genuine ἀσταί, were compelled

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schol. on Av. 1737 and on Pax 1340.

<sup>2</sup> Pl. 530 and Schol.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schol. on Pax 869 and on Av. 160.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Pl. 529.

<sup>5</sup> Av. 1731 seqq. is called by the scholiast an epithalamium, such as was sung by maidens before the door of the thalamos. Women must be included in the appeal in Pax 1317, (χρῆ) πάντα λεῶν συγχαίρειν κἀπιχορεύειν.



by poverty to go abroad and ply a trade for support. Such were many of the ἀρτοπώλιδες (Vesp. 1387 seqq.; Lys. 457; Ran. 858; cf. Vesp. 238); the μυροπώλιδες (Eccl. 841); the στεφανοπώλιδες (Thesm. 446); the λεκιθοπώλιδες (Lys. 457; 562; Pl. 427); the ἰσχαδοπώλιδες (Lys. 564); the λαχανοπώλιδες (Vesp. 497; Thesm. 387; Lys. 456); the σκοροδοπώλιδες (cf. the humorous compound in Lys. 457); the καπηλίδες (Pl. 435; 1120; Thesm. 347); the προμνήστριαι (Nub. 41); the μαῖαι (Lys. 746); the τιτθαί (Eq. 715 seqq.; Thesm. 609; Lys. 958); the μαστροποί (Thesm. 558; cf. 1172 seqq.); the πανδοκεύτριαι (Pl. 426; Ran. 114; Lys. 458), and perhaps the σνοκοφάντριαι (Pl. 970). They are represented as appearing in public in several of the plays. Thus in Vesp. 1387-1414 an ἀρτόπωλις comes to serve a summons on Philocleon for damage done to the bread in her stall, and takes Chaerephon for her κλητήρ. In Thesm. 446 seqq. the στεφανόπωλις<sup>1</sup> says:

ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἀπέθανεν μὲν ἐν Κύπρῳ  
 παιδάρια πέντε καταλιπών, ἀγὼ μόλις  
 στεφανηπλοκοῦσ' ἔβοσκον ἐν ταῖς μυρρίναις.  
 τέως μὲν οὖν ἄλλ' ἡμκακῶς ἐβοσκόμην·  
 νῦν δ' οὗτος ἐν ταῖσιν τραγῳδίαις ποιῶν  
 τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀναπέπεικεν οὐκ εἶναι θεούς·  
 ὥστ' οὐκέτ' ἐμπολῶμεν οὐδὲ θῆμυσιν. . . .  
 ἀλλ' εἰς ἀγορὰν ἄπειμι· δεῖ γὰρ ἀνδράσιν  
 πλέξαι στεφάνους συνθηματιαίους εἰκοσιν.

Cf. also the two πανδοκεύτριαι in Ran. 549-78 (who are, however, metics, as is clear from 569); and Vesp. 497. Women of this class are not very favorably represented by Aristophanes. They are a stout and sturdy set (Lys. 456-60), excel in abuse and "rail like fisherwomen" (Lys. 460; Ran. 857-8; Pl. 426-8; cf. Vesp. 1396 seqq. and Ran. 571-8), are fond of cheating, especially the καπηλίδες (Pl. 435-6; cf. Thesm. 347-8 and Eccl. 153-5), and the occupations of some of them, e.g. the λαχανοπώλιδες (Ach. 478; Eq. 19; Ran. 840; 947; Thesm. 387; 455-6; 910), are considered degrading. In Ran. 1349-51 a woman of the poorer class is described as spinning a skein of linen thread in order to carry it early in the morning to the

<sup>1</sup> The Schol. on Pax 535 says: καὶ πάλιν εἰρήνης οὐσης αἱ γυναῖκες ἀδέως εἰς τοὺς ἀγροὺς ἐξέρχονται καὶ ἀνθολογοῦσιν. This no doubt applies chiefly to στεφανοπώλιδες and the like.

agora to sell it. The women of the poorer classes also went to the spring for water. The scene is vividly described in Lys. 327 seqq. :

νῦν δὴ γὰρ ἐμπλησαμένη τὴν ὑδρίαν κνεφαία  
 μόλις ἀπὸ κρήνης ὑπ' ὄχλου καὶ θορύβου καὶ πατάγου χυτρείου  
 δούλησιν ὥστιζομένη  
 στιγματίαις θ', ἀρπαλέως  
 ἀραμένη ταῖσιν ἐμαῖς  
 δημότισιν καομέναις  
 φέρουσ' ὕδωρ βοηθῶ.

In Ran. 1361 seqq. a woman is represented as going to search a neighbor's house for stolen property.

Women of all classes seem to have been permitted to associate quite freely with persons of their own sex. Scenes like Lys. 5 seqq., where Lysistrata and her neighbor Calonice come out and converse, cannot have been uncommon. In Eq. 1300 seqq. the triremes are personified as a group of women conversing. Women lend to one another *μόνας μόναις* (Eccl. 446-9) ; they invite their female friends to a lunch, sometimes without their husband's permission (Eccl. 348-9, where this is spoken of as a very natural thing ; cf. Lys. 700-4), and go out to assist women in child-bed (Eccl. 528 seqq.). Passages like Lys. 13 and 1007, though they relate to an imaginary occurrence, nevertheless imply considerable freedom of communication among the women of Greece ; otherwise they would be absurd and meaningless.

Women were of course obliged to have some dealings with the family slaves. This liberty was often abused (Thesm. 491 ; Frag. 695). Slaves<sup>1</sup> were used as a means of communication. Cf. Thesm. 340-42. From them also, their mistresses procured information about what was going on. Cf. Pl. 644-770, where the lady listens to the story of the slave Carion.

The Athenian man spent a great deal of his time away from home ; and this gave some married women an opportunity to receive lovers into the house secretly. The precautions mentioned in Thesm. 414-7 were not always employed, or they proved unsuccessful. Cf. Av. 793-6 ; Thesm. 395-7 ; 491-6 ; Eccl. 225. Even

<sup>1</sup> There were also pimps (*μαστροποι*) who acted as go-betweens. Cf. Thesm. 558-9.

when the husband was at home,<sup>1</sup> the wife sometimes contrived to slip out to her paramour without being detected (Thesm. 479-89; cf. Eccl. 522-6). If the husband came home unexpectedly, she enabled her lover to escape by tricks like that described in Thesm. 499-501. It would appear from Lys. 403-20 that the men sometimes connived at their wives' receiving lovers at home and even aided them to do so. Women knew also how to take advantage of their husbands' absence for other purposes. Cf. Eccl. 62-4.

Pax 1144-5 shows that in the country, where the bounds of etiquette were less strictly defined than in the city, a man might occasionally say a few words to a neighbor's wife without fear of offending her husband.

The old women seem to have enjoyed much more freedom than the younger ones. It is noteworthy that they do much speaking in the plays, e.g. Lys. 797-800; 821-8; Thesm. 852-935 (cf. 896); Eccl. 877-1097. Especially striking is Pl. 959-1094, which is probably true to real life. The old woman comes to the house of a man who is not her husband, and is on the point of calling some one out (964) when Chremylus himself comes out, whereupon she converses with him for some time. She has a young lover<sup>2</sup> (975 seqq.) and sends him presents<sup>3</sup> and messages (995-6), goes to see him evenings (997-8), and receives visits from him (1046;

<sup>1</sup> Probably Frag. 18:

A. γύναι, τί τὸ ψοφῆσαν ἐσθ'; B. ἀλεκτρυνῶν  
τὴν κύλικα καταβέβληκεν. A. οἰμώζουσά γε,

refers to a situation of this kind. The lover comes and taps at the door, or possibly makes a noise somewhere in the house. The husband hears it, and asks his wife what it is that made the noise. She is ready with the usual lie, and answers that it was the hen. The husband, having perhaps an inkling of the truth, responds οἰμώζουσά γε. This would make a very comic situation. Cobet supposed that the husband heard a noise and sent his wife to see what was the cause of it, and that on her return he asked her, γύναι, τί τὸ ψοφῆσαν ἐσθ'. Kock agrees with him, and thinks that this view is proved by the word ψοφῆσαν. But this is not necessarily the case, for the *aorist* participle simply shows that the noise had ceased before the question was asked. The husband listens a moment, and then questions his wife. The fragment strikingly resembles Thesm. 479-85.

<sup>2</sup> The vice here satirized prevailed even in the time of Solon. Cf. Plutarch Solon, 20 ad fin.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Thesm. 345; perhaps Frag. 25.

1201). Old women of the lower class (the γραιῖδια κολοσυρτοῦ, Pl. 536) sometimes took advantage of their liberty to ply the trade of procuresses. Cf. Thesm. 558; and also 1160 seqq., in which scene Euripides outwits the Scythian by disguising himself as an old woman of this sort.

## DOMESTIC DUTIES OF WOMEN.

*The Wife Mistress and Stewardess of the House.* The wife stood next in authority to her husband in the home, and within her own sphere she was mistress and head. In Lys. 894-5 Cinesias admits his wife's joint ownership with him in the household property by saying:

τὰ δ' ἔνδον ὄντα τὰμὰ καὶ σὰ χρήματα  
χείρον διατιθεῖς.

The lady of the house gave her own orders to the servants. Cf. Ran. 1338-9; Thesm. 279; 280; 284-5; 293 (where Mnesilochus is imitating a woman). She waked them in the morning (Lys. 18), and sat by and kept them busy at their work (Pl. 533). This supervision was of course chiefly exercised over the female slaves.

The wife was the stewardess of the household and kept the keys of the storerooms. The words ἐπίτροπος and ταμεινύειν are used of her in this connexion. Thus Lysistrata asks (Lys. 495):

οὐ καὶ τὰνδον χρήματα πάντως ἡμεῖς ταμεινύομεν ὑμῖν;

In Thesm. 418-20 a woman complains:

ἃ δ' ἦν ἡμῖν πρὸ τοῦ  
αὐταῖς ταμεινύσαι καὶ προαιρούσαις λαθεῖν  
ἄλφιτον ἔλαιον οἶνον, οὐδὲ ταῦτ' ἔτι  
ἕξεσιν.

In Eccl. 210-2 Praxagora argues thus:

ταῖς γὰρ γυναιξὶ φημὶ χρῆναι τὴν πόλιν  
ἡμᾶς παραδοῦναι. καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις  
ταύταις ἐπιτρόποις καὶ ταμίαισι χώμεθα.

Cf. Pax 1144, where a man tells a housewife to bring out and prepare some food. The women sometimes took advantage of their access to the storerooms to help themselves secretly to provisions, especially wine. Cf. Eccl. 14-5; Thesm. 418-20; 556-9; 812-3. To prevent this the men sometimes kept the keys themselves and

even sealed<sup>1</sup> the doors of the storerooms (Thesm. 421 seqq.). But as it was easy for the women to obtain fac-similes of ordinary seals, their husbands were obliged to use those of a very intricate pattern, which were hard to counterfeit (Thesm. 424-8). There were some husbands who looked very sharply after household affairs and did not leave them to their wives, as appears from Ran. 980-8. But both this passage and the one cited just before it probably contain a good deal of exaggeration. In both passages the increased caution of the husbands is attributed to the influence of Euripides.

*Care of Children.* The children remained under the care of their mothers during the first years of their life, the boys until old enough to begin their studies at school, the girls until their marriage. Often, however, children were placed under the care of nurses (τῑτθαί). Cf. Eq. 715-8; Thesm. 609; Lys. 958. This was the usual custom among the well-to-do classes. But in some cases the mother cared for the child herself, gave it the breast (Lys. 881; Thesm. 691) or fed it with morsels (ψωμίζειν, Lys. 19; Thesm. 692; cf. Eq. 715-8 for the process), bathed it (Lys. 19; 881) and put it to bed (Lys. 19). It is noteworthy that the father sometimes gave the child the care which we should expect from the mother. Cf. Nub. 1380-5. Probably high-born dames like the wife of Strepsiades thought it beneath their dignity to take care of their children themselves. They sometimes petted and spoiled their sons. Cf. Nub. 68-70, where the mother is described as petting her son and fostering his aristocratic tendencies. We may remark in passing that Greek children seem to have felt a high degree of affection and respect for their mother, while to ill-treat her in any way was considered a crime of peculiar heinousness. Cf. the proverb in Ach. 730; also Nub. 1444 seqq.; Ran. 149.

*Cooking.* In general the mistress of the house did not do the cooking herself, but the female slaves did it under her superintendence. "Chefs" were rare until a comparatively late period. We must not suppose, however, that the housewife was idle during the preparation of the meal, and no doubt she sometimes assisted in person in cooking the food. In Ach. 1003-6 Dicaeopolis, who is in great haste, exclaims:

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<sup>1</sup> For this use of seals, cf. Lys. 1195-1201.

ὦ παῖδες ὦ γυναῖκες οὐκ ἠκούσατε ;  
 ἀναβράττετ' ἐξοπτᾶτε τρέπετ' ἀφέλκετε  
 τὰ λαγῶα ταχέως, τοὺς στεφάνους ἀνείρετε.

Some commentators, e.g. Merry, suppose that ὦ παῖδες is addressed to the servants and ὦ γυναῖκες to the wife and daughter of Dicaeopolis. But it is not certain that γυναῖκες in this passage implies any more respect or affection than παῖδες, and the word may refer merely to the *female servants*. Even if Merry is right, it is possible that only the *last part* of the command, τοὺς στεφάνους ἀνείρετε, was intended for the γυναῖκες. Ran. 504-11 proves nothing, for the goddess would not do the cooking herself, except in the sense that "*qui facit per alium facit per se*." Baking bread (verse 505) was especially a thing which she would not be likely to do in person. Eq. 1168 seqq. is mere burlesque. But in Pax 1144-5, which describes a *rustic* scene, the farmer tells his neighbor's wife :

ἀλλ' ἄφενε τῶν φασήλων ὦ γύναι τρεῖς χοίνας,  
 τῶν τε πυρῶν μῖξον αὐτοῖς τῶν τε σύκων ἕξελε.

In Eccl. 221-3, we are told that women καθήμεναι φρύγουσιν and πέττουσι τοὺς πλακοῦντας as of old. Cf. Eccl. 845, which, however, describes the preparations for a feast under the new order of things.<sup>1</sup> There were women who made a business of cooking and selling certain kinds of victuals, e.g. the ἀρτοποιίδες and λεκιθοπώλιδες ; but these belonged to the lower classes.

*Preparation of Wool.* The manufacture of clothing from wool was one of the most important of women's functions. In Lys. 574 seqq. is given a very complete picture of all the processes which the wool passed through in its change from the raw fleece to the completed garment :

πρῶτον μὲν ἐχρῆν, ὥσπερ πόκου ἐν βαλανείῳ  
 ἐκπλύναντας τὴν οἰσπώτην, ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἐπὶ κλίνῃς  
 ἐκραβδίξεν τοὺς μοχθηροὺς καὶ τοὺς τριβόλους ἀπολέξαι,  
 καὶ τοὺς γε συνισταμένους τούτους καὶ τοὺς πιλοῦντας ἑαυτοὺς  
 ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀρχαῖσι διαξῆναι καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀποτίλαι·  
 εἶτα ξαίνειν ἐς καλαθίσκον κοινὴν εὐνοίαν ἅπαντας,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Vesp. 610, where the wife brings her husband a barley-cake in order to wheedle him out of his three obols. Women's *breaking dishes* is mentioned in Thesm. 401-2; cf. Vesp. 1435.

καταμυγνύντας τοὺς τε μετοίκους κεί τις ξένος ἢ φίλος ὑμῖν,  
 κεί τις ὀφείλῃ τῷ δημοσίῳ καὶ τούτους ἐγκαταμῖξαι·  
 καὶ νῆ Δία τὰς γε πόλεις, ὅποσαι τῆς γῆς τῆσδ' εἰσὶν ἄποικοι,  
 διαγιγνώσκειν ὅτι ταῦθ' ἡμῖν ὥσπερ τὰ κατάγματα κέλται  
 χωρὶς ἕκαστον· κἄτ' ἀπὸ τούτων πάντων τὸ κάταγμα λαβόντας  
 δεῦρο ξυνάγειν καὶ συναθροίζειν εἰς ἓν, κἄπειτα ποιῆσαι  
 τολύπην μεγάλην κἄτ' ἐκ ταύτης τῷ δήμῳ χλαῖναν ὑφῆναι.

The different stages of the manufacture seem to have been as follows. First the fleece was washed (ἐκπλύνειν) in the washing-house (βαλανεῖον) to cleanse it from filth (οἰσπώτη).<sup>1</sup> In this operation hot water was used. Cf. Eccl. 215-7 :

πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ τάρια  
 βάπτουσι<sup>2</sup> θερμῷ κατὰ τὸν ἀρχαῖον νόμον  
 ἀπαξάπασαι.

The fleece was next spread<sup>3</sup> on the bench or table (κλίνη) and beaten with rods (ῥαβδίξειν) to free it from impurities clinging to the hairs, and the burrs (τριβόλοι) were picked out. The matted portions<sup>4</sup> of the wool were then separated (διαξάινειν), and the ends of the hairs were plucked clean (τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀποτῖλαι). This last phrase may refer to the process of pulling off matted balls of hair, grease, etc., which clung to ends of the hairs and were not sufficiently removed by mere washing and beating. These balls would resemble *heads* in

<sup>1</sup> Schol. on Lys. 575: τοῦ ἐρίου ὁ ῥύπος οἰσπώτῃ λέγεται. Wool uncleansed and with the grease still in it was said to be οἰσπηρόν (Ach. 1177).

<sup>2</sup> This word may also mean *dye*, and one might be tempted to take it in that sense; but the Schol. explains it by πλύνουσι. Besides, dyeing was more frequently done by men (βαφεῖς) than by women. Thus in Lys. 51 Calonice says βάψομαι, not βάψω.

<sup>3</sup> There is perhaps an allusion to this part of the process in Lys. 732, where the woman says that she will return διαπετάσας ἐπὶ τῆς κλίνης μόνον, i.e. after spreading out the wool on the table to dry in readiness for beating. Cf. Nub. 343: εἴξασιν δ' οὖν ἐρίοισιν πεπταμένοισιν. The sight of wool spread out on the κλίνη must have been a familiar one. Wool was liable to be damaged by cocks if the women left it lying unwatched (Lys. 896); also by moths (Lys. 729-30, from which passage it also appears that Milesian wool was especially prized). Other passages relating to wool are Av. 714, where the spring shearing is mentioned (cf. Lys. 685, where πεκτεῖσθαι is used metaphorically); also Ran. 1386-7, where the tricks of wool-sellers are described.

<sup>4</sup> Schol. on Lys. 578: τῶν γὰρ ἐρίων οἱ μαλλοὶ ἔχουσι τὰς κορυφὰς πεπιλημένας καὶ ἐπὰν τιλθῶσι διαλύεται ὁ μαλλός; also τὰς κεφαλὰς· ὡς τὰ ἄκρα τῶν ἐρίων.

shape. Such may often be seen on uncleansed fleeces at the present day. Next came the carding (ξάινειν), to which there are frequent references. Cf. Eccl. 82-91; Lys. 535-6; 579; Frag. 717.<sup>1</sup> The wool was carded into a basket called *καλαθίσκος*. Cf. Lys. 579; 535; Thesm. 822. Both the washing and the carding<sup>2</sup> were generally done by servants; but poor women no doubt prepared their wool with their own hands, as is clear from Eccl. 82 seqq. Cf. Lys. 536, where the insult to the *πρόβουλος* is heightened by his being bidden to do work which properly belonged only to people of a low class. In Pl. 166 washing fleeces is mentioned by the *slave* along with thieving, selling onions, and other low occupations.

The different flocks of wool (*κατάγματα*)<sup>3</sup> were then united and collected into a single ball or clew (*τολύπη*) ready for spinning.

*Spinning.* One of the most important of women's duties was spinning.<sup>4</sup> The spinner held in her left hand the distaff (*ῥακάτη*), round which the prepared wool or flax was fastened, while with her right she drew out the thread, at the end of which hung the spindle (*ἄτρακτος*), and spun it between her thumb and fore-finger, giving a rotary motion to the spindle (*ἄτρακτον εἰλίσσουσα χερσὶν*, Ran. 1348; cf. the expression *εἰλίσσετε δακτύλοις φάλαγγες ἰστόποινα πηνίσματα*, used of *spiders* in an intentionally absurd passage, Ran. 1314-5). When the thread became snarled, the women disentangled it *ὑπενεγκούσαι τοῖσιν ἄτράκτοις τὸ μὲν ἐνταυθὶ τὸ δ' ἐκείσε*, much as a modern knitter uses her knitting-needles to disentangle snarls in the yarn; cf. Lys. 567-70. The spun thread was called *κλωστήρ* (Lys. 567; 571; Ran. 1349), sometimes *στήμων* (Lys. 519), a term more usually applied to the warp as distinguished from the woof (*κρόκη*). Aris-

<sup>1</sup> In Av. 827 *ξανοῦμεν* is used in a general sense, including not only the carding but the spinning and other processes in the manufacture of the peplos. Cf. Blaydes's note ad loc.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that carding wool is very hard labor. At the present day it is done either by machinery or by strong men. Hence the delicate women of the upper classes would naturally shrink from it.

<sup>3</sup> So the Schol. who defines *κατάγματα* as *κατασπάσματα τῶν ἐρίων*, i.e. *the flocks or slivers of wool into which the tangled mass of hairs is drawn out by the card*. Blümner, *Technologie*, I. p. 106, gives a different and less probable explanation of the word *κάταγμα*, making it mean the wool drawn from the distaff but still unspun.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Blümner, *ibid.* I. 107 ff.; also Marquardt, *Privatleben der Römer*, II. 501.



tophanes gave the name *στήμων ἐξεσμένος* to fine thread.<sup>1</sup> The word for spinning is *νῆν* (Lys. 519).

Probably the spinning was done chiefly by female slaves, but the mistress sometimes "took a hand" in it herself. Cf. Lys. 519; 567 seqq.; especially Ran. 1346 seqq., where a woman in moderate circumstances but still rich enough to have female servants is represented as spinning flax in order to sell the thread.

*Weaving.* Much more frequent are references to weaving<sup>2</sup> (*ὑφαίνειν*), which was perhaps the most important duty of the housewife. Aristophanes does not mention the loom (*ἰστός*) except in the phrase *ιστόπινα πηνίσματα* (Ran. 1315), applied to the spider's web.<sup>3</sup> We have, however, in Nub. 53-5 a clear indication that in his time the upright loom (*ἰστός ὀρθίος*) had not yet been entirely discarded by the women in favor of the horizontal loom; for the *σπαθή*, the flat, heavy wooden blade with which the threads of the woof were beaten close (*σπαθᾶν*) so as to make the cloth of close texture, was used only with the upright loom;<sup>4</sup> whereas with the horizontal loom the comb (*κτεῖς*) was employed. Parts of the loom are mentioned several times. The *κερκίς* is referred to in Av. 831 as an implement *properly* used by women, but employed by the effeminate Cleisthenes. Cf. Ran. 1316, *κερκίδος ἀουδοῦ μελέτας*. The exact range of signification of the word *κερκίς* is uncertain;<sup>5</sup> but in Ran. 1316 it seems to mean a shuttle, and the epithet *ἀουδοῦ* must refer<sup>6</sup> to its well-known

<sup>1</sup> Pollux VII. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Blümner, *ibid.* I. 120 ff.; Marquardt, *ibid.* II. 500 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *πηνίσματα* are probably the threads of the woof which were coiled round the bobbin (*πηνίον*). Cf. Hesychius and Suidas s.v. *πηνίον*; Marquardt, *Privatleben der Römer*, II. 509.

<sup>4</sup> Marquardt, *ibid.* II. 505; Blümner, *Technologie*, I. 137.

<sup>5</sup> Marquardt (*Privatleben der Römer*, II. 508; cf. Rich, *Dict. of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 1881, s.v. *radius*) thinks that the word denotes not only the *shuttle*, but also the long, needle-shaped *rod* (*radius*), which was sometimes used to introduce the threads of the woof through the interstices of the warp, and sometimes to batten the threads close. According to Marquardt the *rod* was used in the *upright* loom, and the *shuttle* in the *horizontal* one. Blümner (I. 134) is inclined to make *κερκίς* always mean *shuttle*. But more probably the word denoted the *rod* in early times and later was applied also to the *shuttle*.

<sup>6</sup> Yet the Schol. strangely understands it of the women *singing as they wove*. He says: *ἀουδοῦ· τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ὥσπερ αἱ ὑφάντριά διὰ τῶν κερκίδων γυναῖκες ἐν τῇ ὑφαίνειν ἀδουσιν*.

sound. The shuttle and its bobbin (πηνίον) must have come into use before the time of Aristophanes, for he uses the words πήνισμα (Ran. 1315) and ἐκπηνίζεσθαι<sup>1</sup> (Ran. 578, where a woman is speaking). In Thesm. 822 the ἀντίον and the κανών are mentioned among women's implements. It is clear that they were distinct from one another, but what they were is hard to say.<sup>2</sup> The κανών in Thesm. 822 is probably the long, double-pointed rod (*radius*) with which the woof was pushed through the warp. The reference to the spear-handle (verse 825) is then clear, for the *radius* resembled a spear in shape. The ἀντίον may be the cloth-beam, or more probably the "heddle-rod" (*liciatorium*).

The evidence that weaving was done by women, and by women of the better class, is abundant. As has been seen, the κερκίς, ἀντίον and κανών are mentioned as implements belonging distinctively to women. In Thesm. 822 the chorus, who boast that they have never lost their ἀντίον, κανών or καλαθίσκοι, are all free Athenian women. In Nub. 53-5 Strepsiades uses the figure of a weaver in order to hint to his wife to be less extravagant. In Eccl. 556, when Praxagora is told that the state has been put into the hands of the women, she asks τί δρῶν; ὑφαίνειν; and in 654 she promises that in the new state the women shall weave ἱμάτια for the men. In Lys. 586 χλαῖναν ὑφαίνειν is the last step in the series of operations which the women perform with the wool. In Lys. 630 the old men say: ἀλλὰ ταῦτ' ὑφηναν ἡμῖν ὄνδρες ἐπὶ τυραννίδι, using ὑφαίνω in its double sense of "weave" and "contrive."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Explained by the Schol. as equivalent to ἐξέλκειν ἀπὸ τοῦ πηνίου.

<sup>2</sup> Rich thinks that ἀντίον (Latin *insubulum*) means the "cloth-beam" at the top of the loom, around which the cloth was rolled when it became longer than the height of the loom. Blümner thinks that κανών, like κανόνες, denotes the "heddle-rods" (*liciatoria*) to which the leashes (μίττοι, *licia*) were fastened; and that ἀντίον in earlier times was perhaps the name of one of the "heddle-rods," while later the word became exactly equivalent to κανών. See his elaborate note, p. 130 of the "Technologie." It seems probable that κανών sometimes denotes the "heddle-rod" and sometimes the *radius*. The different meanings were often confused with one another, and this gave rise to great uncertainty about the true meaning of the word. Cf. Eustathius 1328, 43. So far as the name goes, any straight rod or bar may be called κανών.

<sup>3</sup> Other references to weaving are Vesp. 1143-7; Av. 712; 943. In Thesm. 738 Mnesilochus calls women κακὸν καὶ τοῖς σκευαρίοις καὶ τῇ κρόκῃ. The word κρόκη may mean either "thread," "woof," or "cloth,"

*Working in Flax.* Women worked in flax as well as wool. Thus in Lys. 735 seqq. a woman pretends that she wants to go home on account of some Amorgine flax which she has left unhackled, and promises to come back as soon as she has cleaned it. In Ran. 1346 seqq. it is flax (λίον) that the woman was spinning in order to sell the thread.

*Embroidering.* References to embroidery are quite common<sup>1</sup> in Aristophanes, but proof that it was done by women is scanty. We have, however, evidence that the peplos of Athena, which was woven by noble Athenian maidens, had embroidered upon it the figures of men ἄξιοι τοῦ πέπλου (Eq. 566; cf. 1180, and Av. 827). These girls must therefore have been taught to embroider.

*Other Duties of Women.* As we have seen, women of the poorer classes went to the spring for water (Lys. 327 seqq.); they carried burdens on their heads (Eccl. 222); they sometimes turned the hand-mill, though this was generally done by the slaves (cf. Nub. 1358).

#### EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

The evidence of Aristophanes on this point is not very abundant; yet it tends strongly to prove that the amount of education which Athenian women of the better class received was very slight.

*Knowledge of the Elements.* Probably most women received sufficient instruction in τὰ γράμματα to aid them in their domestic economy. Praxagora is represented as well acquainted with the alphabet (Eccl. 684-6). In Lys. 767 seqq. it is not certain from the context whether Lysistrata reads the oracle or repeats it from memory; but in Eccl. 1011 seqq. the old woman clearly reads the decree at the young man's request.

In Thesm. 432 a woman in concluding her speech says that she will have the rest written out with the aid of the female clerk (τῆς γραμματέως) of the assembly; and a woman named Lysilla is mentioned as having been clerk at a council of women (verse 375). This is of course a burlesque; nevertheless it implies that a knowledge of reading and writing was not uncommon among Athenian women.

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Eq. 967; Vesp. 475; 1215; Lys. 1189; Ran. 937-8; Pl. 1199. Cf. Pl. 530 and Schol.

Still it is noteworthy that there is no instance in Aristophanes of a woman's writing or receiving a letter. Of course the tradeswomen must have been able to calculate sufficiently to keep their accounts. They also had some knowledge of law. Cf. Vesp. 1387 seqq.

*Knowledge of Singing and Dancing.* A knowledge of singing and dancing seems to have been quite widely diffused among the women. To say nothing of the numerous places in the *Lysistrata*, *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Ecclesiazusae* where a chorus of women, or of men and women, sing and dance, even the poor women who ground barley at the mill could sing (Nub. 1358). In Eccl. 893 seqq. (cf. 880-3; 887) the *γραῦς* and *νεαίς* sing alternately, and again in 952 seqq. the *νεαίς* and *νεαίᾱς*; but too much importance must not be attached to this fact, for the women clearly belong to the class of *hetaerae*. In Lys. 408-9 a husband is said to tell the goldsmith that his wife lost the pin of her necklace while dancing at evening. Women danced at the festival of Adonis (Lys. 392), and apparently maidens performed dances in honor of Ceres and Proserpine (Thesm. 101-3). Both women and girls shared in the songs and dances of the *mystae* (Ran. 324 seqq.: cf. 409 seqq.; 444). Women were sometimes introduced on the stage to dance the licentious "*cordax*" (Nub. 540; 555).<sup>1</sup>

*Sources of Information.* Women no doubt gained considerable information by listening to the talk of the men. Cf. Lys. 513. They were in a manner educated by hearing the words of their parents and elders (Lys. 1126-7), though such instruction was rather incidental than intentional. They received a certain amount of intellectual training from hearing the tragedies at the theatre. Aristophanes even makes a young girl speak familiarly of the tragedies of Euripides (Pax 146-8), though he manifestly wishes to add to the humor of the scene by putting the words into the mouth of a child. But the women quote Euripides (Thesm. 390 seqq.), and throughout the *Thesmophoriazusae* their familiarity with his plays is assumed.

<sup>1</sup> The curious Spartan dance called *βίβασις* is referred to in Lys. 82. Cf. Pollux, IV. 102. It was performed by persons of either sex, and required strength and endurance rather than skill, the object being to strike the posteriors with the sole of the foot (*ποτὶ πύγαν ἀλλεσθαι*) as many times as possible. The dances of Spartan youths and maidens are beautifully described in Lys. 1308 seqq.

*Ignorance of Public Life.* Women's ignorance of public life and matters belonging to it is best illustrated by the amusing scene at the opening of the *Ecclesiazusae*, where the women meet to rehearse before going to the assembly. It is noteworthy that Aristophanes has made both *Lysistrata* and *Praxagora* assign a special reason for their knowledge of public affairs (*Lys.* 1124-7; *Eccl.* 243-4), thus clearly marking both cases as exceptional.

Women of the higher classes must also have been very ignorant of matters of business. By the Attic law a woman could not make a contract involving more than the value of a bushel and a half of barley (*Eccl.* 1025).<sup>1</sup>

It would seem from this brief survey of the subject that the position of the Athenian woman, though better than is sometimes represented, was yet decidedly lower than that of the women of civilized nations at the present day. Still it had its redeeming features, above all in the respect shown to the mother of children and the mistress of the home.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Schol. ad loc.; also Meier and Schömann, *Attische Process*, pp. 563, 764.